

Global Covenant of Mayors and UN-Habitat to host the 2024 Innovate4Cities Conference in Montréal, Canada

Montréal, Canada (13 August 2024) – With global temperatures reaching record highs and 70% of cities facing significant climate impacts, the [Innovate4Cities Conference \(I4C24\)](#) is set to shape global discussions on climate progress by leveraging the efforts of subnational governments. Hosted by the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), this key event will take place in Montréal, Canada, convening experts at the nexus of cities and climate change science from 10-12 September 2024.

“Innovate4Cities is an initiative like no other, bringing together science, policy, business, and passionate advocates to co-produce the climate and sustainability knowledge we desperately need,” **said Gregor Robertson, Global Ambassador for Global Covenant of Mayors and Special Envoy for Cities in CHAMP.** “It fosters long-term partnerships and empowers cities to turn their ambition into action, creating a crucial space to overcome challenges and advance inclusive climate action ahead of COP30. This year, we will leverage the momentum of CHAMP (the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships) to drive a whole-of-society approach towards a safe, just, and climate-resilient future.”

“Having worked closely with cities and local governments on housing and informal settlements, I have seen firsthand the transformative power of multilevel collaboration between governments, civil society, academia, and business. The Innovate4Cities Conference in Montréal will not only support subnational governments in accelerating local climate action but will also leverage partnerships and communities of practice, the only way to advance the ambitious climate agenda,” **said UN-Habitat’s Executive Director Anacláudia Rossbach.**

Over three days, I4C24 will feature more than 200 sessions, bringing together cities, academia, and solution providers from business, civil society, and especially communities that often don't have a seat at the table, to advance innovative solutions for city climate action. The aim is to accelerate progress on the Paris Agreement goals, inform the IPCC's Seventh Assessment Report, and serve as a dynamic forum for bridging data and technology gaps, especially in underserved regions and cities in the Global South. It will showcase groundbreaking urban knowledge and solutions, including the [AI x City Climate Action Hackathon](#), helping cities and their partners adopt new approaches to climate risk and vulnerability assessment through the use of AI applications, geospatial tools, and data—along with other exciting announcements that will also be made at the conference.

“As a dedicated signatory of the Global Covenant of Mayors since 2015, and as a city that prides itself on the relentless pursuit of solutions to slash emissions and adapt to the worsening impacts of climate change, Montréal is thrilled to host this year’s Innovate4Cities Conference,” **said Valérie Plante, Mayor of Montréal.** “Collaboration and innovation between local and national governments, business leaders,

cutting-edge climate scientists, and community leaders are key to developing solutions that address the climate crisis and align with the goals of the Paris Agreement.”

The first Global Stocktake at COP28 revealed the world is off track to limit global warming, propelling 72 countries to pledge to work with subnational governments through the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP), underscoring the increasing role of cities in shaping global climate progress. To explore how subnational governments can help advance the achievement of the Paris Agreement goals, this year’s conference will focus on:

- **Multi-level governance and partnerships:** Showcasing the latest evidence that collaboration across levels of government as a crucial conduit for climate policy and action that simultaneously secures basic needs for residents.
- **Biodiversity and climate-resilient development:** Elevating nature-based projects and aligning local efforts with global biodiversity agreements like the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and IPCC-IPBES report.
- **Digitalization:** Exploring the power of digital solutions to transform systems and improve decision-making processes, showcasing local climate action efforts, and featuring a fully hybrid event—AI x City Climate Action Hackathon—designed to innovate and inspire solutions for city climate action.
- **Finance:** Closing the gap on city climate action implementation through honest conversations on the barriers to urban finance and the knowledge that can unlock access for the communities that need it most.

"A policy-relevant interface like Innovate4Cities (I4C), which bridges the gap between science and local action, is a key element in informing the upcoming IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Cities. By bringing together scientists, policymakers and diverse stakeholders, I4C allows the report’s contributors to bridge their findings with real-world engagements on urban climate resilience and sustainability,” **said Winston Chow, Co-Chair of IPCC Working Group II and Professor of Urban Climate at Singapore Management University,**

“Cities are hubs of innovation, generating solutions that address the climate crisis and protect the economy and people’s health,” **said Kelly Shultz, who leads Bloomberg Philanthropies’ sustainable cities initiative.** “At Bloomberg Philanthropies we know data, research and science are most powerful when it’s freely available to the right people at the right time. The Innovate4Cities conference provides a critical platform for the scientific community and city leaders to collaborate and advance innovative climate solutions together.”

The Innovate4Cities initiative, led by GCoM, started with the Cities and Climate Change Science Conference in 2018 and was strengthened by the first Innovate4Cities Conference in 2021. The initiative has played a major role in bringing together key players in city planning, climate change science, and policy innovation with the aim of using the latest research to drive city climate goals and actions. The 2024 Innovate4Cities Conference highlights the strong partnership between GCoM and UN-Habitat and offers an inclusive and collaborative space to share and combine knowledge to guide science and policy.

Due to high demand and limited spaces, in-person registration for the conference is now closed. However, interested media and parties can still watch the sessions via livestream, which will be available [upon registration](#). Journalists are encouraged to tune in, as the livestream will provide first-hand access to key announcements, insights, and opportunities for in-depth coverage.

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About the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy (GCoM)

GCoM is the largest global alliance for city climate leadership, uniting a global coalition of over 13,000 cities and local governments and 100+ supporting partners. The cities and partners of GCoM share a long-term vision of supporting voluntary action to combat climate change and towards a resilient and low-emission society. GCoM serves cities and local governments by mobilizing and supporting ambitious, measurable, planned climate and energy action in their communities by working with city/regional networks, national governments, and other partners to achieve our vision. The coalition comprises cities across 6 continents and 146 countries, representing over 1 billion people or more than 13 percent of the global population.

To learn more about GCoM, please visit our [website](#), or follow us on [X](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

About UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat is the United Nations entity responsible for sustainable urbanization. It has programmes in over 90 countries that support policymakers and communities to create socially and environmentally sustainable cities and towns. UN-Habitat promotes transformative change in cities through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance, and collaborative action. To know more, visit www.unhabitat.org or follow on [LinkedIn](#) or X [@UNHABITAT](#).